

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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DEPT FOR DAVID ERNST (S/NM)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR TU UN

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS-UN TEAM'S VISIT TO TURKEY

REF: STATE 170003; GENEVA 5807

1. FOLLOWING IS PRESS RELEASE BEING ISSUED BY UN JULY 23.

2. TEXT "DR. STEN MARTENS, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNFIDAC AND DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS, ACCOMPANIED BY A CONSULTANT TO THE FUND AND AN OFFICER OF THE DIVISION, VISITED TURKEY FROM 1 TO 8 JULY 1975 AT THE INVITATION OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT.

"THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO EXAMINE AND EXCHANGE INFORMATION REGARDING THE RESULTS OF THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT AND THE UNITED NATIONS, INITIATED BY THE FIRST UN NARCOTICS MISSION WHICH VISITED TURKEY IN AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1974, IN THE TURKISH PROGRAM TO PRODUCE POPPY STRAW INSTEAD OF OPIUM FROM CONTROLLED CULTIVATION FOR PROCESSING INTO ALKALOIDS FOR ESSENTIAL MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS.1/

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"UN ASSISTANCE IS SUPPORTING THE TURKISH CONTROL

SYSTEM AND FACILITATING THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW PROCESS.^{2/}
THIS IS BEING DONE THROUGH THE PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT
FOR THE CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES, SPECIAL
TRAINING, HELP IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF STORAGE FACILITIES
FOR POPPY STRAW PENDING ITS EXPORT, ADVICE ON THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A FACTORY IN TURKEY FOR THE PROCESSING OF
THE UNLANCED POPPY CAPSULES INTO ALKALOIDS, AND IN OTHER
WAYS. UN ASSISTANCE IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UNTIL THE
NEW SYSTEM IS FULLY ESTABLISHED AND THE ALKALOIDS FACTORY
WORKING. IT IS INTENDED THAT UNTIL THE ALKALOIDS FACTORY
IS IN OPERATION THE CAPSULES WILL BE EXPORTED FOR
PROCESSING ABROAD.

"THE UN MISSION VISITED POPPY FIELDS OF ITS OWN
CHOICE IN THREE OF THE SEVEN PROVINCES IN WHICH THE
TURKISH GOVERNMENT HAS LICENSED CONTROLLED POPPY
CULTIVATION FOR THE PRODUCTION OF POPPY STRAW. IT WAS
ABLE TO DISCUSS AND EXAMINE ALL ASPECTS OF THE HARVEST,
AND TO SEE THE RESULTS OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE
GOVERNMENT AND SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS.

"IT SAW NO EVIDENCE OF THE LANCING OF POPPY CAPSULES
IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT PROHIBITION BOTH OF
LANCING AND PRODUCTION OF OPIUM, AND WAS INFORMED BY
RESPONSIBLE TURKISH OFFICIALS THAT NO SINGLE CASE OF
LANCING HAD BEEN DETECTED. FARMERS MET BY THE MISSION
STATED THAT THEY ACCEPTED BOTH THE PROHIBITION AND THE
PRICE-SCALE AT WHICH THE SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE, AS
MONOPOLY BUYER, WAS PURCHASING THEIR UNLANCED CAPSULES.
THEY WERE BEING PAID IN FULL UPON DELIVERY OF THEIR
CAPSULES AND APPEARED TO BE COOPERATING WELL WITH THE
AUTHORITIES. SOME SMALL-SCALE PLANTING IN EXCESS OF
LICENSED ACERAGE HAD BEEN DESTROYED AND THE FARMER
CONCERNED PROSECUTED, EVEN THOUGH HIS OFFENSE MIGHT
HAVE BEEN COMMITTED UNWITTINGLY. ELSEWHERE IN TURKEY,
THE MISSION WAS INFORMED, SCATTERED SMALL-SCALE ILLICIT
CULTIVATION HAD BEEN DEALT WITH IN A SIMILARLY EXEMPLARY
FASHION.

"THE MISSION WAS WELL IMPRESSED BY THE ATTITUDE OF
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THE POPPY FARMERS AND BY THE EFFICIENT WORKING OF THE
CONTROL SYSTEM ESTABLISHED BY THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES."

3. FOOTNOTE 1 READS AS FOLLOWS: "THE USE OF THE POPPY
STRAW PROCESS MEANS THAT THE FRESH SEED CAPSULES OF THE
POPPY PLANT ARE NOT LANCED AND THEREFORE DO NOT EXUDE
OPIUM; INSTEAD THE OPIUM REMAINS INSIDE THE CAPSULE AND
CANNOT BE EXTRACTED AFTER A CERTAIN SHORT PERIOD. ONCE

THE CAPSULES ARE MATURE AND DRY THEY ARE HARVESTED AND COLLECTED. LATER BY AN INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL PROCESS THEIR MORPHINE, CODEINE AND OTHER ALKALOIDS ARE EXTRACTED FOR THERAPEUTIC USE. THIS PROCESS GREATLY SIMPLIFIES THE TASK OF CONTROLLING PRODUCTION AND PREVENTING THE START OF ILLICIT TRAFFIC.

4. SECOND FOOTNOTE REFERS TO PRESS RELEASES PREVIOUSLY ISSUED IN RESPECT OF TURKISH PROGRAM AS FOLLOWS:
SOC/NAR.213 OF 8 OCTOBER 1974; SOC/NAR 217 OF 23 JANUARY 1975; AND SOC/NAR.236 OF 11 JUNE 1975. DALE

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